



# ANG *Bayan*

PAHAYAGAN NG PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS  
PINAPATNUBAYAN NG  
MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOISMO

Special Issue

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## A TRIBUTE TO COMRADE ANTONIO ZUMEL BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Collective grief gripped the Communist Party of the Philippines and the entire revolutionary movement on August 13, 2001, the day Comrade Antonio Zumel passed away. Comrade Zumel—known as Ka Art, Ka Nonong, Ka KP, Ka Manong—was close to the hearts and spirit of all comrades, the working and peasant masses and close allies and friends who had crossed paths with him..

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines pays tribute to Comrade Antonio Zumel—outstanding communist and hero of the Filipino proletariat and people. He was able to serve the revolutionary movement for 30 years. He served as member of the Central Committee for more than 20 years. He has contributed much to the Philippine revolution. His memory will forever be cherished by every Filipino communist.

Comrade Zumel is the Marcelo del Pilar and Amado Hernandez of the new democratic revolution. He



contributed his talent to develop revolutionary journalism. It is to the great advantage of the Party and revolution that he used his genius in revolutionary writing and propaganda. He served as chief editor of various organs of the revolutionary movement including *Ang Bayan*, *Dangadang* (revolutionary paper in Ilocos-Montañosa-Pangasinan), *Liberation* and *Liberation International*.

He served as one of the pillars of the Second Great Rectification Movement starting in 1992. Comrade Zumel's deep grasp of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism served as one of the Party's solid anchors in confronting the relentless anti-CPP demolition campaign launched by the revisionist traitors, counterrevolutionaries and the reactionary state in 1992-94.

He employed his pen to expose the rottenness of the anti-Party elements and groups and tear asunder their



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anti-communist line. He laid out in simple and popular form the often complicated questions confronting the Party and revolutionary movement. His statements, both sharp and witty, pierced the very heart of revisionism and were embraced by revolutionary and popular forces.

Comrade Zumel was a revolutionary statesman. He personified the revolutionary movement, looked after its prestige and further raised it both in the Philippines and in the international diplomatic community. As Comrade Manuel Romero, Chairman of the NDF, Comrade Zumel served as an instrument in the relentless effort to strengthen and expand the NDF. His contributions were fully recognized by the NDFP revolutionary forces when he was elected as its Honorary Chairman and assigned as senior adviser of the negotiating panel of the NDFP tasked to face the reactionary state in the realm of peace talks.

Comrade Zumel was among those who played a leading role in carrying the revolutionary position in peace talks and correcting the past mistakes in handling the talks in 1986-87 which he also directly participated in. He closely studied the peace talks and militantly advanced the application of revolutionary principles to attain from the talks maximum political and diplomatic advantage for the people and revolutionary movement and prevent the dirty maneuvers of the enemy to subsume the revolutionary movement to the political framework of the reactionary state.

In his last years, Comrade Zumel had become part of what may be called the older generation of Filipino communists. However, never did there exist any gap between himself and his younger comrades because his heart and spirit was always filled with the progressive and forward-looking ideals streaming from Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. His youthful exuberance never diminished, as shown by his vigorous and active

accomplishment of revolutionary tasks and his being ever lighthearted and joyful. His rich experience never diminished his readiness to study and learn from younger revolutionaries whom he worked with from day to day. His humility was exemplary.

From his established position as a journalist in the late 1960s, Comrade Antonio Zumel embraced firmly the revolutionary program of the Communist Party of the Philippines as well as the difficult life and arduous struggle that come with it. For more than 30 years, he never gave much thought about the sacrifices he had to bear including his diabetes and kidney ailment, which ultimately caused his death.

Despite the difficulties and sacrifices faced by Comrade Zumel, he never lost his positive outlook on things, even in difficult and tight situations. The interest of the people and revolution was always his primary concern. To those who knew him, he was always known to be affectionate towards comrades, taking into consideration the interest of others before his own and offering everything for the Party, the revolution and people. As a good communist, he offered his life for the overthrow of the rotten and oppressive ruling system, the attainment of national and social liberation in order to establish socialism and contribute to the historical mission of the proletariat to achieve communism.

*Long live the memory  
of Comrade Antonio Zumel!*

*Long live the Communist Party  
of the Philippines!*

*Long live the Philippine revolution!*

## Comrade Antonio Zumel's revolutionary history

- **1969 and 1970**, became President of the National Press Club (NPC). During this time, the NPC became a bastion of press freedom, defense for civil liberties and national democratic mass organizations. He became an organizer and leader of a journalist's union
- **1970**, became chairperson of the Amado V. Hernandez Foundation. He helped in publishing revolutionary reading materials
- **1970**, became a member of a Party group under the National Press Bureau which was administered by the General Secretariat of the Party
- **1972**, became a member of the Preparatory Commission of the National Democratic Front under the National United Front Commission
- **1972-1974**, became a member of the staff of *Liberation*, NDFP mass paper and *Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas* (NDFP's news agency)
- **1975**, became editor of *Dangadang* (revolutionary mass paper of the Ilocos-Montanosa-Pangasinan region)
- **1976**, became editor-in-chief of *Ang Bayan*
- **1980**, he was elected member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party
- **1986-1987**, became a member of the negotiating panel in the peace talks with the Aquino government
- **1987-1989**, became a member of the Party's National Commission for Propaganda and editor of *Ang Bayan* while concurrently serving as a member of the Provincial Committee of Pampanga
- **1989**, went abroad for medical reasons and other official tasks, applied for political asylum when the Aquino regime canceled his and his wife's passports.
- **1990-1994**, became chairperson of the National Democratic Front as Comrade Manuel Romero.
- **1990**, continued working overseas under the direction of the Central Committee and International Work Bureau.
- **1992-1994**, actively campaigned for the Second Great Rectification Movement and repudiated the errors of opportunist and traitors, edited *Liberation International*
- **1994**, he was elected Honorary Chairperson of the NFP and the National Council of the NDF and senior adviser of the negotiating panel of the NDFP
- **2001**, came home to the Philippines under the protection of JASIG to guest in the Solidarity Conference for a Just and Lasting Peace last April

## Comrade Jose Maria Sison's tribute to COMRADE ANTONIO ZUMEL

*(Read at Comrade Antonio Zumel's wake on August 17, 2001 at the Crematorium Daelwijk, in Utrecht, The Netherlands.)*

Julie and I and our entire family join all the comrades and friends in grieving the death of Comrade Antonio Zumel. We express our sincerest condolences to Mela Castillo his beloved and loving wife and comrade, his children Malaya and Veronica, his sisters, brothers and other relatives.

We all share a sense of loss over his passing away. At the same time, we are comforted that his pain and suffering have ended. Comrade Zumel lived a full and meaningful life in the service of the people and we draw inspiration from his exemplary character and his revolutionary record.

Comrade Antonio Zumel is an outstanding communist. His contributions to the advance of the Philippine revolution are significant. He dedicated the best years of his life for the struggle to complete the new-democratic revolution and pave the way for the working class to fulfill its historic mission of building socialism and preparing the way for communism.

He reached the highest level of leadership in the revolutionary movement, as member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines since 1980 and as chairman of the National Democratic Front from 1990 to 1994. He became NDFP honorary chairman and senior adviser to the NDFP negotiating panel from 1994 onwards. He was editor-in-chief of *Liberation and Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas* at various times.

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“ Comrades in various organs and organizations entrusted to him all these high positions by virtue of his dedication to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat and the people, his high level of ideological, political and organizational competence, his style of simple living hard work and arduous struggle and his humility and selflessness. ”

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Throughout the periods that I worked with him closely, from 1976 to 1977 and from 1989 to the time of his demise, I knew him as a model of discipline and devotion to duty, conscientiousness in study and work, considerateness and warmheartedness. He was also lighthearted, apt to crack jokes at appropriate times. He was a wholesome, reassuring and comfortable person to be with in bad or good times.

Comrade Zumel dedicated his talent and skills as a journalist to the revolutionary movement. He excelled in information and education work. He carried forward the fine tradition of Marcelo H. del Pilar and Amado V. Hernandez. The pen complements the sword of the Philippine revolution.

Comrade Zumel was already accomplished in his profession before he joined the revolutionary movement. He rose from copy boy to reporter in *The Philippines Herald*. He was news editor of the *Manila Bulletin* and was twice elected to the presidency of the National Press Club (NPC) in 1969 and 1970, after having been elected 15 times as member of the NPC board of directors.

At the same time, he was consistently a union organizer and union leader in the newspapers that he worked for. He and his colleagues in the press were about to launch a federation of mass media workers' unions when martial law was imposed on the country in 1972.

I did not have the chance to meet Comrade Zumel until 1974. But I followed his activities with keen interest through comrades mutually close to us. I was elated when he became close as an ally to the Party and eventually became a Party member.

In 1969, as NPC president, he acted in support of the beleaguered journalists of *Dumaguete Times* and came into close contact with highly responsible comrades. From the outbreak of the First Quarter Storm of 1970 to the declaration of martial law in 1972, he made the NPC a stronghold of the mass organizations in the Movement for a Democratic Philippines. He made the NPC building available to the mass activists as venue for

press conferences and refuge from police and military assaults during mass actions.

He became the chairman of the board of directors of the Amado V. Hernandez Foundation (AVHF) and cooperated with Comrade Antonio Tagamolila, president of the College Editors' Guild of the Philipines (CEGP), to publish the second edition of *Struggle for National Democracy* as joint project of the AVHF and CEGP.

It was in the 1970-72 period that he developed rapidly into a communist revolutionary. He joined a party group under the auspices of the National Press Bureau of the Party's General Secretariat and became a member of the Preparatory Commission of the National Democratic Front under the United Front Commission of the Party Central Committee.

During his second term as NPC president in 1970-71, he aligned the NPC with the movement for national liberation and democracy. Upon the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971, he helped establish the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties (MCCCL) and this was based in the NPC building.

He went underground on the day that martial rule of the Marcos fascist dictatorship began. In the period of 1972 to 1974, he worked in the staff of the NDFP organ *Liberation* and *Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas* (news agency). In this period we called him Ka KP.

We met somewhere in Pampanga in 1974. He was then slated for deployment to what was then called the Ilocos-Montanosa-Pangasinan region. Once more, we met in Pangasinan in 1975. He was then editing and producing *Dangadang (Struggle)* in our Ilocano regional language. Later on we called him from Ifugao to the Party center.

It was not until July 1976 that I met Comrade Zumel again somewhere in Pampanga when he came for briefing and discussions in preparation for reorganizing the staff of *Ang Bayan*. For about a month, we stayed together moving about from house to house and from barrio to barrio, together with other comrades. Then, separately we had to leave Pampanga because of the capture of Commander Dante (Bernabe Buscayno), then the commander-in-chief of the New People's Army in

August 1976.

We were able to regroup in order to form the new editorial staff of *Ang Bayan* only in the last quarter of 1976. Comrade Zumel was appointed editor-in-chief of *AB*. At that time, we called him Ka Art. Because I was *AB* political director, I worked closely with Comrade Zumel and the *AB* staff. The *AB* underground staff house became one of my retreat posts for writing until my capture on November 10, 1977 in La Union.

Soon after my release from military detention in 1986, I met Comrade Zumel and other comrades a number of times to discuss the new situation, prospects and tasks. From the latter part of 1986 to early 1987, he was a member of the panel negotiating with the Manila government from the latter part of 1986 to early 1987. He came forward as a principled statesman of the people. He upheld the position of the revolutionary movement in the negotiations.

*Let us always remember him as a communist, a fervent proletarian revolutionary fighter and a patriot ever determined to struggle for the liberation of the Filipino people from national and class oppression and exploitation.*

Central Committee and the National Council of the NDFP on many important issues. He was elected in absentia to the chairmanship of the NDFP from 1990 to 1994 under the nom de guerre Manuel Romero. The NDFP Conference of 1994 named him honorary chairman of the NDFP and the NDFP National Executive Committee subsequently designated him senior adviser to the NDFP negotiating panel. He was also editor of *Liberation International*. We called him Ka Manong or simply Manong during the time of his exile.

Comrade Zumel made crucial contributions to the

Second Great Rectification Movement. He stood firmly for the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the political line of the new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war and the organizational line of democratic centralism. He vigorously criticized and repudiated the major errors committed by the opportunists and renegades from 1979 to 1992.

He shared weal and woe with comrades and the masses and took the necessary risks to life, limb and liberty. So many times, he was directly in situations when the enemy forces pressed hard on our forces in urban and rural areas and he faced dangers and difficulties like the rest of us. He had the unique achievement of evading arrest and detention. Thus, he contributed greatly to the continuity of the revolutionary leadership when I was captured and imprisoned.

I can say more about Manong. But no matter how much I say, I can tell only a part of his rich experience. No single person, not even someone like me who is privileged with some vantage point and close comradeship with Manong, can give a full account of his revolutionary life and deeds. The full picture can be approached only by the available records of collectives and testimonies of many comrades.

Comrade Antonio Zumel has left an indelible mark in the history of the proletariat and people. His revolutionary qualities and deeds inspire us. Let us emulate his example and make it a living force for the advance of the Philippine revolution. Let us always remember him as a communist, a fervent proletarian revolutionary fighter and a patriot ever determined to struggle for the liberation of the Filipino people from national and class oppression and exploitation.

Long live the memory of Comrade Antonio Zumel!

Advance the struggle for national liberation and democracy!

Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines!

Bring about the complete victory of the Philippine revolution!

Long live the Filipino people!

# The way to peace lies in the fulfillment of the people's aspirations

BY ANTONIO ZUMEL

Senior Adviser, NDF Negotiating Panel

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*Excerpts from Comrade Antonio Zumel's last speech which was read for him in April at the Solidarity Conference for a Just and Lasting Peace*

**T**he revolutionary movement has waged armed and other forms of struggle over the last 32 years. It upholds and advances the national and democratic interests of the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the nationalist bourgeoisie, against those who champion U.S. imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

We sacrificed a lot of lives in the fight against the Marcos fascist dictatorship, and later, against the Aquino, Ramos and Estrada regimes which had pretensions to "democracy" while essentially upholding the interests of foreign and domestic exploiters and oppressors. We in the revolutionary ranks have had to surmount tremendous odds and our own shortcomings. The revolutionary determination and tenacity of the many of us have prevailed. With the passing of time, the forward movement of the revolution has been sustained.

In the more advanced guerrilla zones of the New People's Army, the peasant masses and our comrades are sowing the seeds of tomorrow's government. With the assistance of comrades, the peasants are setting up the organs that take care of the people's needs. There are committees for land reform, production, self-defense, health, education, culture. Adult literacy is promoted, and peasants who could not read or write are now being taught to do so. It is exhilarating and invigorating to see the peasants, who had never

exercised political power other than to vote in the traditional elections, are now taking things into their hands and running their lives.

In the factories, revolutionary cadres assist the worker masses in organizing unions and asserting their democratic rights. The more politically advanced workers who are victims of "globalization's" contractualization, flexibilization and liberalization join the New People's Army, as do the peasants in the countryside.

Madame President, ladies and gentlemen. In reopening peace talks with the GRP, we in the National Democratic Front, are consistently seeking the fulfilment of the people's demands for national liberation and democracy. We do not engage in armed struggle because we glorify war or bloodshed. If the masses are so receptive of the revolutionary movement, it is because the reasons for armed struggle are still prevalent in Philippine society. Conditions in our country are such that exploitation and oppression are pervasive. These conditions are becoming worse year after year. If these conditions for revolution were not present, we could cry ourselves hoarse and nobody would listen.

As revolutionaries, we firmly believe that victory in the armed struggle will provide the optimum political and economic conditions to realize the national and democratic demands of the people and to pursue a socialist revolution. But we undertake peace talks on the chance that

the two of us—the GRP and the revolutionary organizations which support the NDF program—may reach agreement across the table.

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In the coming period, our negotiators—those of the government and of the NDF—will sit across the table to pursue the talks that were interrupted when the Estrada regime reverted to its "all-out war" policy almost three years ago. We look forward to the successful resumption of the peace negotiations, the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and an agreement on social and economic reforms and other basic issues.

Those of us who joined the movement in its infancy in the late 1960s or early 1970s are getting on years. Among the most senior in years compared to the young people in our movement, I am myself approaching my 69th year and will soon be gone.

Those of us who are getting on in years can only look with satisfaction and pride on the swelling ranks of the revolutionary movement that now fights for our people's national and democratic rights - and in the future, for socialism.

It is the fond wish of the NDF that the peace talks that are to be resumed succeed. It is my personal wish in the twilight years of my life to see the conditions for a just and lasting peace take root in my beloved homeland.